(b) The rehabilitation & rebuilding of Railway Bridges is not decided merely on basis of age but on age-cum-physical condition basis and technical consideration. Therefore, concept of overage is not used in context of Railway Bridges. There are 527 Railway Bridges which have been found to be distressed as on 1.4.2002 and all of them have been sanctioned for rehabilitation/rebuilding.

(c) The bridge over river Dhabe where the accident of Rajdhani Express took place on the 9th September, 2002 is not one of the bridges identified as distressed.

(d) Does not arise.

Fast trains between Madgaon and Mumbai

443. SHRI RAMA MUNI REDDY SIRIGIREDDY:
SHRI K. RAMAMOHANA RAO:

Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the Railways are considering to introduce the fastest train in the country, to link Madgaon and Mumbai;

(b) if so, the details of the proposal;

(c) by when the Ministry propose to introduce the train;

(d) whether the Ministry propose to extend the same to other cities; and

(e) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI BANDARU DATTATRAYA): (a) There is no such proposal at present.

(b) to (e) Do not arise.

ROBs/RUBs in Uttar Pradesh

†444. PROF. M. M. AGARWAL: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) the number of over bridges and under bridges being constructed on the Railway lines passing through Uttar Pradesh for

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

the last three years and the number of such bridges constructed so far; and

(b) by when the remaining bridges are likely to be constructed?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI BANDARU DATTATRAYA): (a) At present, 26 ROBs/RUBs are under construction, out of which, 10 were sanctioned during last three years *i.e.* 5 on cost sharing basis, 4 under B.O. T. Scheme and 1 on deposit terms. 7 such works were completed during last three years.

(b) It will depend on commencement & completion of work on approaches to be done by the State Govt. Railways will make every effort to complete work on bridge proper simultaneously with the work of approaches.

Opposition of creation of railway zones

445. SHRI KARNENDU BHATTACHARJEE: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the move to create additional railway zones was consistently opposed by the Railway Board on financial, administrative and technical grounds from the very inception, till as late as November last year;

(b) whether the move was also opposed by the Standing Parliamentary Committee of Railways for self-same reasons; and

(c) if so, the reasons for creating the zones in the wake of professional and technical opposition from all quarters?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI BANDARU DATTATRAYA): (a) After the decision to create new zones was taken in 1996-98, steps were taken to create them by posting of Officers-on-Special Duty and some skeleton staff. Part infrastructure was also built. One Division was attached with each zone. Provisions were made in the Budget every year and funds were provided. Subsequently due to resource crunch in view of the increase in expenditure after Vth Central Pay Commission, the creation of new zones has been progressing slowly. There was also debate